# THE CEA CRITIC

Formerly THE NEWS LETTER of the College English Association

Vol. No. XVI—No. 4 Published at Northampton, Mass., Editorial Office, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass. April, 1954

Duke University Library
APR 29 1954
Durham, N. C.

## ENGLISH INSTRUCTION IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippine public school system was started by Americans at the beginning of the century and modeled after the American pattern, with the exception of seven years in the elementary school rather than eight. English was—and still is—the language of instruction. But there could be no English spoken during the war years and no regular education. Consequently, by 1945, there was a tremendous backlog of eager Filipinos, from the first grade through college, who welcomed the chance to resume their studies. The Education Act of 1940 dropped the seventh year of elementary schooling, and the six years now tried to do what seven years formerly had done. Large classes of the double-single session became mandatory, and naturally led to a policy of no failures. These same overcrowded conditions have made it impossible to enforce the compulsory education law, for there is not even sufficient room to take care of those who come voluntarily.

The import control law has caused a serious shortage of textbooks and professional material for teachers. The majority of students are very poor and even a two-dollar book is an expense that cannot be met. Even today there is often only one or two readers for an entire class.

### Serious Language Problem

There has been genuine concern over the fact that English is deteriorating in the Islands. The younger generation of Filipinos cannot speak or write as fluently as the older generation taught by American teachers. First, of course, is the war and the necessary cessation of English during that time. Since then, poorly-trained teachers in English have been training new teachers, who are, of course, poorer than their tutors. Furthermore, although English has been the language of instruction since 1900, it still remains a foreign language to many Filipinos.

Of the seventy dialects and languages in the Philippines, there are eight major ones, but not more than twenty-five per cent of the people speak any one. In 1940, Tagalog was designated by law as the national language. But it is the native language of only 25.43% of the people. Language is, therefore, one of the major educational problems.

Children begin school with no knowledge of English, yet it is the language of instruction. At the same time, they must take Tagalog every day during their elementary schooling. In the high school, Spanish becomes compulsory, as well. That makes three foreign languages in a reduced time schedule, and no time to develop fluency or understanding in any one. Although all Filipinos want to speak English, they often have very little chance to practice outside the classroom, as their friends and families converse more easily in one of the native dialects, and very little chance to practice in the overcrowded classrooms.

### How English is Taught

There is a strong feeling on the part of many educators who understand the problem well that English should not be started in the first grade—probably not until the fourth or fifth grade; they maintain that the early basic training should be in the dialect of the region. An interesting experiment is being conducted along that line now in Iloilo, and so far, the results seem to strengthen this point of view.

The stress in the teaching of English on all levels is twofold: a letter-perfect memorization of all the rules of grammar, and a rigid and inflexible attachment to the syllabus. There is too much stressing of terminology and the analysis of sentences written by others — usually Americans — and too little time spent in speaking and writing. Textbooks by Filipinos for Filipinos are desperately needed. A beginning has been made in this direction.

### Cultural Achievements

In spite of these problems in the teaching of English, one may travel anywhere in the Islands and be understood through English. On the higher level, there is an interesting and solid body of Filipino writing in English that commands the respect of anyone who takes time to find and read it. Their strongest writing has been in the field of the essay and the short story, though they have made some notable contributions in poetry. Many of their best writers did not survive the war. The younger group of writers have not yet digested their war experiences. But the next five years will produce contributions in the field of letters which will attract the attention of all English-reading people.

### Low Standards

There are many well-trained, alert educational leaders in the Philippines who are self-sacrificing in their efforts to meet the many problems peculiar to their country and their people. Professionally, they command respect.

But one of the outstanding needs in the Philippines is professional standards in the field of teaching extending to many, rather than held by the few. Most college teachers are paid by the class or hour, with no pay for holidays or vacations. Therefore, many trained teachers have turned to other work for their regular income, and teach only a few hours each evening, while many, untrained for teaching, have seen in this few hours' daily stint in the classroom an easy way to supplement their regular income. Reading 563 themes written by teacher-training students on the subject, "Why I Chose to Be a Teacher," I found four common reasons: it is the cheapest course, the shortest course, the easiest course, and as a profession has the least work and the shortest hours. Almost all the papers admitted that teaching was "the lowest profession."

(Continued on Page 3, Column 4)

## TRAGEDY, AND ALSO ROMANCE

A year ago I wrote a letter to the editor of the *Critic*, in which I tried to account for some of the dissatisfaction currently being expressed about the way our efforts toward liberal education are going. It seemed, and it still seems, to me that there is good reason for this dissatisfaction, though many of the reasons offered and most of the remedies proposed are manifestly foolish.

My premise was, and is, that our purpose in liberal education is to help students find out and understand what their situation is, as mature and responsible members of civilized society at the present time, what they can do for themselves and what is their duty to others, and where we are going from here. My conclusion was, and is, that for these purposes the humanistic attitude, by itself, is obsolete and therefore inadequate. I hoped that my letter of a year ago would arouse some discussion, even some controversy, on the question, but none directly followed.

### Tragedy Not Enough

I am prompted to renew the effort, and to approach the question in a less controversial way, by having read and thought about Professor O. J. Campbell's very stimulating little essay on "The Values in English Literature," printed in the February, 1954, issue of the *Critic*. Mr. Campbell writes, as a humanist, and he writes very eloquently and well, about tragedy, which I agree with him in thinking the highest and finest expression of the humanistic attitude in literature. I also agree with him in thinking that a thorough study of tragedy is one of the most valuable aspects of a good liberal education. But when Mr. Campbell goes on to say that we should *not* teach "the productions of the current cult of unintelligibility," and specifies Dylan Thomas's poems and James Joyce's "*Finnegan's* [*sic*] *Wake* and a good deal of *Ulysses*," he exposes the weakness, the inadequacy, of the exclusively humanistic attitude in education more clearly and more devastatingly than I could possibly do without the aid of his corroborative testimony.

These works and others like them by Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, Gertrude Stein, William Faulkner, and many more of the best contemporary writers, works which have been attacked and derided by humanist critics on the same grounds (so, in their day, were the works of Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Emerson, Melville, and Whitman), are precisely the most penetrating, serious, and potentially useful literary explorations we have of our present situation and the various attitudes which an imaginatively mature person may take in trying to deal with it adequately and effectively.

If the humanists cannot understand this literature, which is doubtless what they mean by calling it unintelligible, then I am willing to concede that they at least ought not to try to teach it. But from this it does not follow that no one can understond it, or that no one should teach it. If we are to perform our proper function, as I have described it, someone must teach modern literature, and teach it well, so that students, by understanding it, can better understand themselves and the world they live in.

Tragedy is a fine thing, but it is not enough. It helps us greatly to understand how we got where we are, and to appreciate the inspiringly vast resources of the human spirit—the spirit of civilization—that has brought us so far from the primeval mud. But the humanist spirit, the spirit of tragedy, has not brought us all the way. It is interesting to me that I do not know of a single great work that can properly be credited to that spirit in English literature since the seventeenth century. We are now—and apparently it is not superfluous to say so—in the middle of the twentieth.

I had better explain here that I am assuming a pretty strict definition of a tragedy as the story of a man generally good, but having some flaw or defect of character which leads to his downfall, at the same time increasing his and the audience's awareness of what it is to be human. This definition assumes in turn an ideal—a Platonic ideal, norm, or archetype—of the perfect human character, which men in general and the protagonist in particular aim at, but inevitably fail to achieve.

### Two Great Revolutions

Tragedy and the humanistic attitude which it expresses have been obsolete (though, I insist, historically important and humanly valuable still) for these three hundred years because of two great revolutions of thought and feeling, so profound in their bearings and effects that they have radically changed the whole character of our civilization. Not to recognize the nature of this change, which is still going on, is to cripple our efforts to preserve and carry forward the civilization which is our birthright and our hope of earthly salvation.

The first of these two revolutions was the scientific, or mechanistic, which took place effectively when the Newtonian universe displaced the Ptolemaic in men's thinking, during that same seventeenth century that saw the death of tragedy. The coincidence is not accidental. When earth and man could no longer be thought of as the center of all things, and when the universe was thought to be a machine and man little more than another machine, tragedy could no longer be regarded as an adequate expression of contemporary problems, attitudes, or feelings. Pope, Fielding, and Swift, all humanists, but humanists now in postures of satirical defense, fighting rearguard skirmishes against the trend of the times, followed Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton. Humanism and sci-

(Continued on Page 3, Column 1)

**THE CEA CRITIC**

Published at 15 Armory Street
Northampton, Massachusetts

Editor
MAXWELL H. GOLDBERG
Managing Editor
LEE E. HOLT
Consulting Editor
ROBERT T. FITZHUGH
Published Monthly, September through May
COLLEGE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

President
WILLIAM L. WERNER
Pennsylvania State University

Vice-Presidents
LEVETTE J. DAVIDSON
University of Denver
LIONEL STEVENSON
University of Southern California

Treasurer
ALBERT P. MADEIRA
University of Massachusetts
Executive Secretary
MAXWELL H. GOLDBERG
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts

Directors
Bruce Dearing, Swarthmore College
Alan Van Keuren McGee, Mount Holyoke College
Autrey Nell Wiley, Texas State College for Women
Robert T. Fitzhugh, Brooklyn College
Kathrine Koller, University of Rochester
Norman Holmes Pearson, Yale University
George S. Wykoff, Purdue University
Edward Foster, Georgia Institute of Technology
Ernest E. Leisy, Southern Methodist University
Henry W. Sams, University of Chicago
Harry R. Warfel, University of Florida

Associate Member, American Council on Education
(All official mail c/o College English Association
11 Old Chapel, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass.)
Annual Subscription, $2.00

Re-entered as second-class matter January 24, 1952, at the post office, Northampton, Mass. under the Act of August 24, 1912.

Entire issue, copyright 1954 by the College English Association.

## FACTS OR MEANING FOR ALL?

### The Five Point Program Again

The fifth objective of the "Proposed C.E.A. Five Point Program" continues to intrigue me. "To succeed . . . with our students . . . *as we find them*": my italics indicate the focus of my interest; I see no ivory tower, but a wasteland, fertile in spots, as indicated by the rank growth of weeds.

### Start Among the Weeds

First, so that the college freshmen can see daylight, the weeds must be cleared away, and this is back- and spirit-breaking hand labor. Labor-saving machinery, such as standardized tests, objective tests, and available textbooks, is not enough; we have to go into the rank weed patches, made to grow jungle-thick by the magazines, radio, and television, and start pulling weeds by hand.

When the freshmen find out what is to be done, they will pull some weeds for themselves. The trouble is that good literature for them has been, in high school, such a nebulous thing that they have had, since the first grade or before, no literary value that they were sure of, except an interest in how a story comes out. For the rest, particularly poetry, the functions of good literature have been concealed by official public school cant and gush.

So you must crawl into the weed patches and sit down with the freshmen, close to the dirt, the smell of television studios, journalistic presses, and schoolma'am sentiment so thick that it sickens you, although they who have been spiritually ill since the third or fourth grade suppose that it is you who are in poor health; yet, rebellious as Americans are at heart against the cant of the public schools, they feel that you may have something they need. Now you are in a part of what the fifth objective calls euphemistically "democratic America." If you were wise, you brought with you some current issues of pulp and slick magazines, or, better still, you have in your pockets some mimeographed sheets, prepared in the manner of I. A. Richards' *Practical Criticism*, with unidentified passages from good literature, the slicks, and the pulps. You start spelling out the meaning of the words to them; you show them the words which the propagandist uses with his eyes on his prospective customers, and those which the true artist uses as he looks steadily at his subject. There is a struggle of spirit among your freshmen and some of them pull a few weeds. After a while, a little sunlight falls on your particular corner of America.

### Light in the Jungle

One day, partly by fortunate accident, the meaning of literary history shines dimly into your jungle. A story like Mary Hastings Bradley's "In Sickness and Health," in the September, 1953, *Ladies Home Journal*, comes to hand; you put down the Merchant's Tale, The Wife of Bath's, and *The Sun Also Rises* beside "In Sickness" and you begin to spell out for them the differences between crude characterizations and those of an ancient and a modern artist. As you do so, the horror of popular fictional ethics stands out like writing on a wall. Your freshmen become more robust, they start to laugh at the weeds, and the weeds wilt a little and the grass and flowers begin to grow—*begin*, I said.

All of this time you have been crawling in easy stages through the jungle historywise. The meaning and usefulness of literary history has shone down upon you and yours dimly more than once; at such moments you know that you have come as near as is possible in our time to achieving a complete rescue for the young men and women on your safari. In the words of the Five Point Program, they are finding meaning for themselves in their world. You have come, let us say, to the *Divine Comedy;* some have found much meaning for themselves in this ancient story; others have found very little; no one seems very clear as to the connection between our lives, six days a week, and Dante's story.

You ask them to read "Sweeney Among the Nightingales" and "The Hollow Men." Still offended by the idea that a poem, to be good, must be adequately difficult, they start feeling sorry for themselves again, and wish that they had never pulled any of the weeds. The Christian name Apeneck brings out a reluctant smile. They like the setting, too—at least mine do in western Pennsylvania. You ask what is characteristic of all the men and women in the poem, and a girl, her poor imagination stultified by antiseptic movies and television, says they are "unrefined." Later someone says that these men and women represent the whole range of the animal kingdom, from ape to amoeba.

Later—it is quite late now—someone says a crime has been committed. Urged to name the crime, he, as innocent of any profound concept of evil as he is of insult, leers at the blonde across the aisle and says he thinks there may have been a prostitute present. Pressed to consider the last stanza, he admits that he recognizes something pertaining to ancient Greek literature, but since he hasn't looked at that part of the book for several months, he begs to be excused until next day, so that he can do some reviewing. Sometimes, you have the impression that these efforts are steps up a very gradual slope.

### Out of the Wasteland

Eventually, a scale of values develops on the blackboard: ancient civilized behavior, primitive behavior, criminal behavior, animal behavior; and parallel to it, if it is moved up or down to the right position, is Dante's simpler scale, Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. They are asked to fit in the missing portion of Eliot's scale, modern civilization. To do so, you recommend that they continue to study "The Hollow Men" and correlated reading. Now they are reaching up with one foot, trying to take a short, cautious step up a steep incline. It may be up the delectable mountain.

I say I am intrigued by the fifth objective. Perhaps the General Education movement will develop tests which will show to all and sundry that a few steps up the mountain, out of the wasteland, are better than the mere cramming of literary data in chronological order. A survey of mail order anthologies—Montgomery, the first semester; Sears, the second—would be about as useful in helping a freshman find meaning for himself in his world, unless his is only the world of material facts and figures. But until such tests are developed, it is likely that the factual routine will continue—fact finding, fact cramming, fact testing.

MART HUGHEY
State Teachers College
California, Pa.

## *Understanding Poetry*

What do we mean by "understanding poetry"? The well-known textbook by Brooks and Warren encourages us to reserve the name for the *full* understanding of a poem in all its nuances, a mastery of what is sometimes called its "total meaning." Yet can we, as teachers of literature, accept this? Do we, in our practice?

### A Working Method

I submit that we do not, and rightly so. If we did, few of us could claim to understand much poetry. When I examine my practice as a teacher, I realize that my working definition of understanding poetry is a combination of two things: first, a demonstrable grasp of the tenor of the poem, the essentials of the paraphrasable meaning; and second, a feeling of comprehension, a lack of bewilderment. When these two things are present, a reader can be said, in a working sense, to understand a poem, even though further reading of the poem, or the comments of critics, may reveal layers of implication not perceived at first and remove layers of misreading and "reading in."

If this definition, or something like it, is not accepted, then are we not saying that no poet worth reading can be understood except by a few expert readers, thereby condemning poetry to be what our Philistines insist it is, a special game of no human significance played by a few longhairs? I doubt if such a position would reflect truly either our own experience of how a poem communicates, or the assumptions that underlie, or ought to underlie, our professional commitment to the job of introducing successive classes of inexpert readers to literature.

### An Experiment

These reflections were prompted by a little experiment on which I reported to the 1952 meeting of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the College English Association. I gave a class of freshmen an unknown poem (Peter Viereck, "Like A Sitting Breeze," *The American Scholar*, Spring, 1951) and asked them to write out for me what it meant. Four-fifths of the class, by my definition, understood the poem, most of them well, even though many misinterpreted some detail here and there, and nearly all missed the light, ironical *tone* of the poet and read him oversolemnly. Conceding that further discussion would have *perfected* their understanding of this poem, I think I was able to convince the meeting I spoke to that the great majority of my class (a good but not exceptional one) had satisfactorily grasped Viereck's meaning.

### Receptiveness All-important

I report the episode because it has seemed to me unusually instructive. It suggests that the "perfectionist" definition of understanding poetry now in vogue is not appropriate to many common situations in our work as teachers. And it has been a salutary reminder for me, also, that not all "obscurity" is the fault of the poet. I chose this poem because it had been cited, even by the editor who printed it, as unusually obscure. My results indicate pretty plainly that this little poem, whatever its faults, was not obscure. It seemed so only to a few who possibly didn't *want* to understand it. My freshmen did not know enough not to be receptive, and therefore they did better with this poem than some of their better-read seniors.

We cannot remind ourselves too often, I feel, that, indispensable as standards are, the first mark of a good reader is flexibility and responsiveness, a "negative capability." To cultivate this is the true discipline of the teacher of literature, as opposed to the self-indulgent dogmatism that is our constant temptation. After all, the point of any good poem is its challenge to us to admit a new experience. Both traditionalists and formalists do the cause of literature a disservice in so far as they encourage a scorn of everything that does not fit the measure of the masterpieces they accept.

### Revive the Amateur Spirit

We need a revival in our own ranks of the amateur spirit in the reading, the judging, the teaching, and the writing of poetry. This is not Billy Phelps-ism; an over-exclusive approach to literature does not sharpen, but dulls, our discriminations. Art is not a race in which no one scores but the winner, any more than it is a figure-skating contest in which the patterns are fixed beforehand.

STEPHEN E. WHICHER
Swarthmore College

**Tragedy and Romance**
(Continued from Page 1)

ence, so far as science is mechanistic, are irreconcilable enemies, and science has won that war.

**The Organic Metaphor**

The second great revolution was the romantic, which began a century and a half ago and is still going on. At first it had considerable success, and its early results are now accepted by most humanists, though they were not at the time they appeared. I note with friendly approval that Mr. Campbell speaks well of Wordsworth and Meredith. But romanticism is not humanism, as Professor Babbitt has convincingly pointed out. Its metaphysical basis is not Platonic idealism, but a system of thinking and feeling derived from the organic metaphor, the image of the growing plant or animal. For that reason, I believe that it is not possible to write a romantic tragedy.

The romantic notion of human character is not that it is a more or less satisfactory approximation of a perfect and therefore static ideal, but that it is a continuously developing pattern of feeling and behavior. A romantic story with an unhappy ending is, accordingly, one in which the protagonist's natural, necessary development is frustrated in some way. The effect is not tragic, but pathetic. And though romantic pathos, when it is not vitiated by sentimentalism, can be a fine and noble emotion, it is not a tragic emotion. Critics who look for tragedy in romantic literature and find instead only the pathos that may be there are likely to be puzzled and disappointed. Sometimes, inappropriately as it seems to me, they express themselves on the matter in tones of moral indignation.

The early success of the romantic movement did not last very long. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the concepts of scientific materialism, as Whitehead has remarked, were refined by the advent of electromagnetic theories, and the romantics, in their turn, went on the defensive. Modern writers are trying very hard, often rather desperately, to regain the initiative by purging romanticism of sentimentality and correcting the formal and intellectual looseness that made it too easy a mark for its critics, both scientific and humanistic, a hundred years ago. My belief is that they will succeed, in fact, that they have already in considerable measure succeeded, in the very works most under attack by humanists today.

**Natural Allies**

Now, what all this has to do with liberal education in our present scientific age and mechanized society seems to me fairly clear. The humanist and the romantic are natural allies in the fight to assert personal values (and what values are not personal?) in the presence—if necessary, in the teeth—of a materialistic tendency to base everything on merely quantitative analysis. Each ally has his contribution to make: the humanist his faith in the absolute value of the human mind and spirit, or soul; the romantic his faith in the value of relations, physical, intellectual and emotional, between the individual and his environment. Not only that, but the best scientists nowadays are rapidly departing from the old mechanistic materialism and adopting, as Whitehead urged, an organic basis for their thinking. They, too, can be, many of them are now, our allies too.

If we work together, each in his own way and in his own sphere of greatest effectiveness, not hiding differences, but respecting each other's virtues, we can greatly improve the relative position of liberal education, as opposed to specialized technology, for the benefit of our whole civilization. Romantics, of whom I am one, cannot do this effectively without the help of humanists, because our tradition is grounded in theirs; it is too slight and recent, and too little understood, to carry the burden alone; and I do not expect to see a time when that will not be so.

Therefore, I hope that humanists and romantics will co-operate, for if either group of us tries to go it alone I doubt that we will have as much success as we all would like. Together, I think we will be able to help students achieve such a broadly cultivated, individually and socially competent and responsible adulthood as will justify liberal education to them, to us, and to the public at large.

RICHARD P. ADAMS
Tulane University

[Prof. Adams' "Emerson and The Organic Metaphor" appears in PMLA, LXIX (No. 1, March, 1954), 117-130. See, too, Prof. Morse Peckham's "Toward a Theory of Romanticism," *ibid.*, LXVI (March, 1951), 5-23, presented at Penn CEA meeting; also Prof. Adams' "Romanticism and The American Renaissance," AL, XXIII (January, 1952), 419-432. Both Prof. Adams and Prof. Peckham draw substantially on Arthur O. Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being*.—Ed. Note]

## NECEA

Fall Meeting: Babson Institute, Wellesley, Mass., Oct. 30. Program Chairman, Harry T. Moore, Babson; President, Franklin Norrish, Northeastern; Secretary-Treasurer, Curtis Dahl, Wheaton.

**GNYCEA Elections**

President: Harry G. Gayley, New York University
Vice President: Donald Sears, Upsala College
Sec.-Treas.: Arthur Waldhorn, CCNY

**NEW! A Complete Course in Freshman English Composition In One Volume, Combining Reader, Rhetoric and Handbook**

***New Highways in College Composition, 2nd Edition (1954)***

by CARGILL, CALL, WATT & CHARVAT

**Features of the Revision:**

- The Reader has been extended to include a whole new section of poetry and three new plays: O'Neill's **Ah Wilderness;** Miller's **Death of a Salesman;** and Christopher Fry's **A Phoenix Too Frequent.**
- The illustrative material in the Rhetoric has been brought completely up to date.
- The Handbook has been changed to offer a descriptive rather than a prescriptive approach.

960 pp. • 7" x 9-¾" • April 1954

**PRENTICE-HALL, INC. N.Y. 11**

*A new kind of freshman anthology*

**perspectives**

LEONARD F. DEAN
*Editor*

. . . 56 interrelated selections that lead the student to recognize the direct relationship of the reading and writing he does in freshman English to the reading and writing he does in his other courses.

**$3.00**

***HARCOURT BRACE AND COMPANY***
***New York***

## *I've Been Reading*

Charles L. Wallis. *Stories on Stone*. Oxford University Press, 1954. This book is the first comprehensive publication of American "grave literature" and contains more than 750 verified inscriptions from all States and from each decade in American history. The materials are arranged according to subjects, such as history, patriotism, poetry, sentiment, experimentation, and humor. There is an introductory section, which traces the writing and use of epitaphs, and concludes with an extensive bibliography on the subject. The text begins with a reproduction of the inscription on the only extant original tombstone to a Pilgrim Father. The last chapter is devoted to epitaphs from the graves of animals.

I like especially the epitaph which says, "The chisel can't help her any," and also one from the tombstone of a man "who never sacrificed his reason at the altar of superstitious God, (who) never believed that Jonah swallowed the whale."

WILLIAM G. DUSTAN
Keuka College

**Adult Education Seminars**

The Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults is holding a series of regional faculty seminars for discussion of the problems of adult education. American International College in Springfield, Mass., will be host on May 7 and 8 to a conference of Western New England adult education schools, and on this weekend another conference is scheduled in Omaha. Plans are under way for a New England regional conference in the fall.

**1954 CEA INSTITUTE**

**Industry - Liberal Arts Exchange**
**Reducing the Gap**

**The Kellogg Center**
**Michigan State College**
**The Oldsmobile Plant, Lansing**
**June 24-25, 1954**

**Not limited to CEA members. Probable cost, exclusive of travel, $20**

**For information: Max Goldberg, Clyde Henson (Michigan State), Robert Fitzhugh (Brooklyn), Donald Lloyd (Wayne)**

**English in Philippines**
(Continued from Page 1)

**Professional Organization**

The stimulating effect of professional association is one means of meeting the problem of raising teaching above the level of a job. A group of interested teachers formed the necessary nucleus and a one-day conference was held in Manila in March, 1951. In November, 1951, a second national conference was attended by 600 delegates from all sections of the Islands, and the College English Teachers Association—called CETA—became a full-fledged organization, with officers and a constitution. Widespread interest in the program led the officers to print the main addresses in one volume, which has had a wide circulation throughout the Islands. Since then, the third and fourth national conference (for 1952 and 1953) have been held, with gratifying results. The development of regional conferences was begun this past year. CETA is now a firmly established organization that commands respect and attention. Its leaders are the outstanding educators of the Philippines.

**Exciting Experience**

No longer is the phrase, "effective communication," a glib cliche for me. I have learned its meaning and have seen the importance of language as a tool of democracy. To be faced with the problems a Filipino teacher meets daily, to work under such handicaps, leaves little time for academic quibbling over terminology. It requires an enthusiasm for teaching that teachers with jaded appetites can never know.

To have lived and worked in the Philippines is to have had a rare privilege. To see a young nation struggle optimistically and enthusiastically against such overwhelming odds, yet never to lose faith in themselves or their future, is to understand the strength and power of democracy.

Humbly and gratefully I salute my Filipino colleagues.

GRACE STUART NUTLEY
Brooklyn College

"The Values in English Literature" by Oscar James Campbell, which appeared in the February, 1954, *CEA Critic*, was originally read before the Greater New York CEA. "The Student and the English Teacher" by Benjamin Lease, in the same issue, was from the CEA National Meeting. Carl Lefevre of Pace has suggested that *Critic* articles originally presented at CEA meetings be so designated; in the future every effort will be made to do this.—Ed.

# *A Little Learning is a Dangerous Thing*

[Part of a paper read before the November meeting of the Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina CEA at Sweet Briar College. An editorial on this speech appeared in the Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, passages from it were published on the editorial page, and news items on it were run in a number of other papers.]

One of the relatively few satisfactions of teaching freshmen is the fact that whatever you tell them is bound to be something they didn't know. I believe that our entering freshmen at the University of Richmond are at least as well prepared as those matriculating at any other college in Virginia—and that is faint praise! We use a screening process, of course, but it would take a much finer gauge to eliminate all the inadequately prepared. If we, or any other college, got really tough about it, we would be hard put to muster a corporal's guard of new students, come September.

So we have to do our best with the material at hand and try desperately to teach them in one year what they should have learned in the preceding twelve. They simply do not know the fundamentals.

### Poor Spellers

They cannot spell. Moreover, they do not see why they should. My own ground rule that calls for a failing grade on any paper that has more than five misspelled words they regard as unconstitutional, on the ground that it is a cruel and unusual punishment. Several weeks ago I assigned a test on a list of six hundred words in the *Harper Handbook*. After two weeks, presumably devoted to study, I took a hundred words from the list. In one section the average grade was 74.2; in the other it was 67.5. As many of you know, this is not a list of tricky or unusual words, and I made no effort to select the difficult ones, either. Now, this is pretty sad. It is scandalous!

Upperclassmen are a little better, but not much. Slovenly habits acquired through years are hard to break.

### Poor Writers

The freshman who has any real knowledge of grammar is almost a curiosity. Reference of pronouns, agreement of subject and verb, and the distinction between plurals and possessives—all these in his eyes belong in the remote and mysterious arcana of rarefied thought along with transcendentalism and the obliquity of the ecliptic. As James A. Michener has said, "If by hook or by crook you can teach your students to write accurate sentences, you will have given them an excellent vocational course. The American who can write a competent sentence is rare."

The organization of even a two-page theme presents the average freshman with a problem in logical thinking beyond his capacity. He knows little about a beginning, a middle, and an end—still less about transition. Having been assigned his two pages, he skips a couple of lines at the top and bottom of each, uses wide margins and large handwriting, takes off with a remark about "our modern world of today," rambles on, and puts a period at the end — as often as not at the end of a sentence fragment. Assign a definite number of words to be written, and the results are no more gratifying.

### Little Taste

Worst of all, however, the freshman has very little to say and not much intellectual curiosity to learn more. He is woefully deficient in taste and appreciation in any of the arts. He sees no irony in the fact that after countless thousands of years of human progress the technical marvel of television is used to disseminate the talents of Howdy Doody and Milton Berle.

In literature, all too often his taste runs to the comic books—and very seldom to the better sort. The A or B student, it is true, may appreciate the authentic drawing of "Prince Valiant" or the genuine humor of "Pogo," but then, how many freshmen make A's or B's? And lest I be considered a long-haired critic in love with culchuah, I confess that I greatly prefer "Pogo" to William Saroyan and that I like "Prince Valiant" much better than the moonstruck vagaries of Kandinsky and Hans Arp.

### Can't Even Read

Finally, I offer without extended comment the proposition that few freshmen can read. Poetry is not supposed to make sense at all, and prose—well, they have probably heard of it—but the King James Bible or Sir Thomas Browne or Mary Webb falls on their undried ears with the same dull thud as an Army directive or a textbook in economics. (I hope I am not being indecent.)

### We Could Do Better

"Oh, well, they're only freshmen," we hear it said; "what do you expect — mature geniuses?" No, I don't. Twenty years' toiling in an arid vineyard has taught me better than that. But twenty years more—a sombre thought!—is not going to persuade me that the product we have is the best we can get.

Nor do employers of high school graduates think so, either. If anything, they are louder in their protests than ivory-tower professors. And so the chorus swells: "What are we getting for our money?"

This year there are four times as many pupils in school as there were in 1870. Ninety times as much is spent on public education. The school year is twice as long. The proportion of teachers to pupils is greater. Far more time is spent in teacher training. Nine times as much money is spent per year on each child, and thirteen times as much is invested in buildings and equipment. These statistics are taken from Professor Bestor, who points out that they are calculated after adjustments have been made to take into account the depreciation of the dollar. . . . . .

### Liberal Education Is Practical

As I see it, it all adds up to this: public-school training has lost its direction. No longer is its prime purpose the transmission of a liberal education or training in the basic disciplines. It has sacrificed the long-range objective —the mature mind—for the immediately practical.

I am convinced that this is a mistake. I am convinced that in the end a liberal high-school education is *more* practical. At the moment we need not worry about its ornamental value. Those of you who were present at the CEA meeting at Hollins College a few years ago will recall the remarks of the personnel director of Western Electric. He stressed the need for a sound foundation in English, saying that his company could train electrical engineers, but that it could not teach English. I have heard the testimony of bankers and businessmen to much the same effect; and many of my former students now in business have confided that they would be better off if they had spent more time with Shakespeare and less with principles of marketing.

Now, if these are valid observations concerning college graduates, how much more necessary it is that high school graduates be well instructed in the basic disciplines and the liberal arts. It is quite possible that an acquaintance with Virgil and Chaucer and Browning may teach them more of moral evil and of good than afternoon excursions to the local sewage disposal plant or the gas works. For those who are not going to college, this is usually their last chance. They may be the ones who need a liberal grounding most of all. This is democracy.

### What Is Wrong?

It seems clear that in most schools they are not going to let it. Why? Why have the professional educationists turned against the intellect? And why has the public permitted them to debase a system of democratic education to which it is irrevocably committed?

Let me summarize my answers to the first of these questions:

First, the educationists are a vested interest. They create an artificial demand for claptrap. They set their own requirements. They are an inbred monopoly devoted to perpetuating themselves in power.

Second, they have become impregnated with a great enthusiasm for St. Dewey — and hardly less for William Heard Kilpatrilck. I do not know why Dewey should appear so attractive to them; why the doctrine that "the only test for truth in an idea is in its consequences in the life activities to which it leads" should call forth the hosannas. Nor can I understand why they should exult in the assertion that there is no mind or soul in the ordinary sense, and no fixed moral laws. But they do! I think Dewey was wrong, but I also think he knew what he was about. I doubt that as much can be said for his drove of followers.

Third, they cherish an abiding prejudice against any relic of the old aristocratic system. This system emphasized content; it was intended for the sons of gentlemen; it is old. Therefore content, or, as they put it, "reactionary subject-matter courses" cannot be endured. It is as logical as that.

Fourth, they distrust scholarship, particularly in the graduate schools, because it is so remote from their own trivia as to surpass their comprehension.

Fifth, little minds are inevitably attracted to jargon. Just as black magic needs the incantation, educationism needs cant and cackle. It is their liturgy.

Sixth, teacher training is so encumbered—like Everyman and his sins—with required courses in education that little room is left over for anything else. To the high priests of the cult this is no disadvantage whatever. To teach nothing by the numbers is a far, far better thing than to teach something by heretical means. And nothing is often what the pupils get. To save embarrassment on both sides, a conspiracy of ignorance ensues, in which teacher and pupil tacitly agree to ask no uncomfortable questions in the classroom.

Finally, a degree in education is an easy way out for the mediocre. "In the country of the blind a one-eyed man is king." I do not propose to dwell upon the debasing of the Doctor's degree by the advent of the ersatz Doctor of Education. I don't even like to think about it.

At the conclusion of this mournful list, I should like to quote Thomas R. Lounsbury: "We must view with profound respect the infinite capacity of the human mind to resist the introduction of useful knowledge."

### How It Happened

Let us return to the other question: Why has the public permitted the debasement of its education system?

For one thing, the public does not fully realize what is happening. This failure is due in part to sheer indifference. Parents are prone to shirk responsibility simply because they do not want to be bothered. "Oh, well," they say with a shrug, "that's their business. We've got too much else to think of."

Those whose interest is great enough to get them out to PTA meetings are often dazzled by the assured manner and slippery phrases of the imported professionals. If they attend often enough, mere repetition may win over, even if the magic word "expert" does not.

Another critical weakness of the public is to judge its schools by their cafeteria service, their plate-glass windows, and the amount of chromium plate. All these are visual evidence to which they can

*Ready This Month*

**WRITE NOW**

**A. C. Edwards**
**Natalie Calderwood**
**Edgar Wolfe**

A new writing manual for Freshman composition, which has a direct and immediate application to the problems that the student meets in college. The 25 writing assignments are primarily intended for use in the classroom. They are preceded by selected readings.

**HENRY HOLT & COMPANY**

point with pride. They do not realize that a good teacher on a gum stump is worth a dozen chromium-plated dullards.

**What Can Be Done?**

So — what can be done about it? What can be done on the school level itself? Let the scientists, the mathematicians, the historians plead their own cause. I sincerely hope they will; but as an English teacher, I should like to see a great deal more composition required from grade school on up, and I should like to know that the papers are graded competently and regularly. My conferences with freshmen lead me to believe that both competence and regularity are rare.

I should like to see more emphasis on spelling and formal grammar. It seems unlikely that the emerging psyche is going to be very severely bruised by the imposition of a little understanding of the native tongue.

I would restore Latin and modern foreign languages to a position of respectability.

Most important of all, we should encourage incentive. We should relegate to outer darkness and gnashing of teeth the idea that promotion according to ability is productive of trauma among the slow-witted. Away, once and for all, with the idea that pupils ought to be graded like eggs—according to size.

These proposals will do for a start. It will probably take fifty years to accomplish them. It may be a task that belongs to the ages.

So much for the lower echelons. On the administrative level a good many other reforms loom in the view of eternity.

It seems almost axiomatic that teachers' certification requirements in the subjects they expect to teach should be raised. The present Virginia figure of eighteen hours in English — not so long ago it was only twelve — ought to be increased to twenty-four at the least, and preferably thirty. No grades below C ought to be counted, either.

Equally obvious is the screaming need for an increase in teachers' salaries, in order to attract better candidates to the profession at all levels. Even the most devoted perceptor is not likely to cultivate the death-wish to starve.

Most of us, I think, would favor raising college entrance requirements. Part of the blame for the current low estate of public-school learning does, indeed, rest upon college administrations. I stress the point because the threat of higher standards on the part of colleges is one thing that worries educationists into sleepless nights.

The monopoly of the interlocking brotherhood in policy-making and curriculum-making should be broken, and the educationists should be set to their proper business as technicians of method. Professor Bestor would be willing to allow them practically a free hand here. I am not so sure that I would. It would be much safer to keep an eye on potential subversion. . . . .

**Eternal Vigilance**

The best defense of our schools, finally, is eternal vigilance — the vigilance of a public enlightened as to *all* the implications of Deweyism and the sweet jargoning of Columbia Teachers College. It is our duty to see that the public is informed, even though it take continuous yapping to do it.

We are confronted with a nation-wide problem. When I assert that public education is sick, I do not mean to say that there are not able administrators and principals to be found — and excellent teachers. It is a tribute to all of them that as many students learn as much as they do.

Furthermore, I am certainly no enemy of public education or democratic ideals. But I want to know what I am paying for *is* education and that it *is* democratic. I am not in favor of a twelve-year program of spoon-feeding and baby-sitting. We must look beyond the immediately practical to the training of students to the extent of their capacities. Preparation for life is best secured by the basic disciplines and through devoted attention to the liberal arts.

LEWIS. F. BALL
University of Richmond

**Cares of a Graduate Scholar**

"Frustration"

I came here to polish my wit,
To cogitate, study, and sit;
Instead, night and day
The game that I play
Is *Ibidem, Ibid., op. cit.*

"Easier to Grade"

A certain professor myopic,
With climates from frigid to tropic
And one hundred years
Of princes and peers,
Assigns everyone the same topic.

"Values"

I read the professor's own books,
His articles, papers, — and looks;
And what does he do
But challenge my new
Opinion on buttons and hooks?

"Passing the Buck"

My typewriter must be illiterate
And such a perverse little critter it
Refuses to spell
What I spell good and well—
It's making me cross and embitteret.

"Mechaniccs"

I've never had trouble with spelling
I know how to spell 'Felix Schelling'
In notes and rough draft,
But I must be daft:
When I type it, I write it like 'selling.'

"Ditto"

Of brains it is said I have plenty;
My vision is twenty and twenty;
I proof-read with care—
Some elf must be there
To change my 'Durante' to 'Durente."

"Lop-sided"

I work eighteen hours a day;
I never have leisure to play;
But comes a vacation
I rush to the station
To frolic and roll in the hay.

"My Sacrifice"

The dollars and cents I've invested,
The volumes I've chewed and digested
Are nothing compared
To the time that I spared
For courses I loathed and detested.

"Slanted"

The papers that have to be in
Use up all my time to begin;
And courses in reading
I'd rather be heeding
Are neglected, perforce; it's a sin!

"Lost Motion"

I read with a speed short of 'Whist!'
I take notes on the entire list;
But comes the exam
And I'm in a jam—
They fuse and refuse to untwist.

I read with a speed short of lightning;
The assignments I cover are frightening;
But ask me a fact:
My mind doesn't act;
My brain needs a little untightening.

"Where the time is, there the field is also"

If ever I get my degree
And anyone ever asks me
"What field were you in?"
I'll say with a grin,
"In typing and biography."

—MYRTLE PIHLMAN POPE
Chamblee, Georgia


A spring publication

**FORM AND STYLE IN THESIS WRITING**

formerly
*A Form Book for Thesis Writing*

**William G. Campbell**

Here is a complete revision of a manual that has become a standard reference work. All basic material has been thoroughly reworked in accord with the latest established usages. The improved format makes reference easier, and facsimile specimens provide typists' models. A special feature is the new section on accepted forms and variations for such fields as biology, chemistry, geography, mathematics, and for legal references and labor-union documents.

**Houghton Mifflin Company**

*coming in April*

**READING and WRITING**

By BELCHER, CLIFTON
MALE, OLIVE & SHOCKLEY

A new freshman reader correlating reading and writing in five parts: Reading Newspapers, Reading Textbooks, Reading for Information, Reading for Ideas, and Reading for Attitudes. Detailed study aids provided. Probably 448 pages, $3.50.

*just published*

**SYMPOSIUM**

By ARMS & LOCKE

This new freshman anthology is designed to arouse interest and provide useful models for writing. Consists of essays on issues of immediate concern to the student with related short stories. Probably 640 pages, $4.00.

**Rinehart & Company**

232 madison avenue new york 16

**OXFORD Anthologies for English Classes**

**Thought and Experience in Prose**

By CRAIG R. THOMPSON
*Lawrence College*
and JOHN HICKS
*Stetson University*

Thoreau and Thurber, Jefferson and Toynbee are among the many writers represented in this diversified collection of essays. It continues to be popular for a large variety of English courses. Among the colleges which have most recently adopted the book are: James Millikin University; Johns Hopkins University; Ohio State University; Oberlin College; University of California, Berkeley; City College of San Francisco; Lafayette College; Olivet College; Rutgers University; West Point
671 pp. 1951 $4.00

**Reading Prose**

By WRIGHT THOMAS
*Cortland State Teacher's College, N. Y.*
and
STUART GERRY BROWN
*Syracuse University*

"This book is commendable for the general excellence of the selections chosen . . . and the management of a very wide range both in style and subject matter. It offers not only the usual comments on reading prose, but a specimen analysis which might be profitably used to make the book a real training in reading."—CHARLES E. BECKWITH, University of California, Berkeley
718 pp. 1952 $4.00

**Reading Poems**

By WRIGHT THOMAS
and
STUART GERRY BROWN
*Cortland State Teacher's College, N. Y.*

"A distinctly usable book . . . built upon an intelligent principle—that the enjoyment of a poem comes from a critical understanding of that poem. It contains an excellent selection . . . with enough variety for individual tastes. The notes are keenly critical."

A. L. BADER, College English. 795 pp. 1941 $3.75

**OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS**

114 Fifth Avenue New York 11

# An "F" For the Teacher!

by A. S. Tudent

I don't like composition teachers. They missed the boat while attending classes and have never caught it since. I wouldn't go so far as to say they're stupid or uneducated, but it's obvious that they don't know who they're teaching, what to teach, how, or why. They don't really think. Like Pavlovian beagles, they're conditioned to respond with such gravities as "'whom,' lad; it ought to be 'whom they're teaching,' not 'who'."

Piffle! They tie us in sacks and drown us in piffle. I don't blame them, you understand; they're what they are, the product of their training, and they're doing the best they can — I suppose. They studied language and literature in college until grammar and poetry left soft, moist spots behind their ears; and they expect us to write perfect English in the style of whatever century they happen to be most familiar with. Contemporary American speech, a nervous, direct medium for dealing with problems as varied as dating and the atomic bomb, they know not of. Brilliant and bespectacled, they walk benignly backward down the crowded thoroughfare of life, their eyes focused gravely on a remote and receding past. No antennae on *their* ivory domes — no sir!

### Some Good Points

But let me be generous. No doubt there's a modicum of value in the present professional training of college composition teachers. Becoming familiar with great literature from Beowulf to Browning, and learning to write that well-documented study in mediocrity called Dissertation — the two activities which take up most of their time — doubtless enable them to sketch in the background for an understanding of literature and of research writing. So far as it goes, this knowledge is necessary and good. But it's not — and this is my main objection —*as* good or *as* necessary as several other kinds of knowledge. These latter shouldn't be left to chance.

### Better Methods

For example, knowing *who* is important: knowing the student himself as a person with a history as well as a present, as an individual with attitudes, feelings, emotions, and needs, as well as a lamentable disdain for the niceties of formal English. Callow or sophisticated, larva or moth, the student is an individually developing social being, who is neither static nor entirely adult. The teacher trained in the subtleties of the aforementioned B-B and D is not nearly so likely to perceive differences in development or to be able to interpret fleeting cues of cause-and-effect relationships as is the one specifically trained to understand late-adolescent behavior. Studying literature may be one good means for learning about human nature, but as preparation for daily excursions into the mazes of collegiate individuality, it's hardly the best

### Write Truly

Understanding *who* would probably free teachers from their more egregious blunders in *what*. Sacks and piffle! The present system of teaching theme-writing is as backward-centered and inane as the average dissertation. Instead of writing to fulfill their needs, students write to fulfill assignments. Instead of being asked to submit representative samples of the numerous kinds of writing, the successful use of which would help to make their years on campus enjoyable and full, they are asked to turn in neat little themes that no one (thank heaven!) but their teacher will ever read. Yet it would seem more in keeping with human integrity to write truly, to the best of one's ability, of things that matter than to write, however grammatically and well, of trifles. Again, it's the fault of the teachers.

### Make Practice Real

They teach the irrelevant to strangers. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, diction, etc., etc., etc. These are all piffle unless they relate directly to the student's own needs — preferably to needs more important than simply passing courses.

If *who* and *what* are badly handled, *how* is disastrous. Take anything at random. Take the system for marking themes. The teacher reads and corrects them; the student duly notes his "errors." Yet, if the material is worth reading — meaning if it's likely to persuade, educate, or entertain students — it should be read primarily by the students themselves. How else will they learn the effect of their writing upon people whose reactions are normal? How learn about each other, each other's interests and abilities—their audience, and how to write for it? And this brings up another point. Why, when the very purpose of language is social and communicative, should students be expected to do their own original work, always and ever? "Go off in a corner, Johnny; sit there and write your theme. No help whatever is to be given or received."

Composition teachers don't know why they're teaching. If they did, they wouldn't do it the way they do. They'd give practise not only in the individual expression of thought, but also — and perhaps more vital — practise in group work, in co-operation toward tackling and solving the myriad problems that beset daily living.

### And Solve Our Own Problems

Of course, they don't know much about the problems of daily living. That's what I've been saying all along. I've heard that they haven't solved such immediately pertinent co-operative problems of their own as, say, how to conduct unified programs of research, how to devise appropriate standards for tenure and promotion, and— the jackpot—how to convince administrators and public that they deserve salaries comparable with plumbers'.

The period's about over. I'll have to stop writing. But I wonder: Teacher, are you still engrossed with checking my punctuation and grammar? Or are you — just possibly — wondering whether there's any truth in what I've said?

LOUIS WARD
Purdue


**Just Published!**

A PRACTICAL WORKBOOK FOR ADULT CLASSES IN ENGLISH

**ENGLISH FOR ADULTS**

By H. J. GOTTLIEB, B. B. GAMZUE, and M. KALB

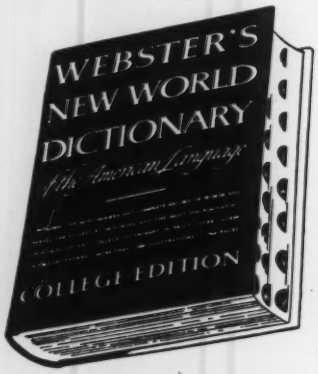
*New York University*

A simply written, well-tested review course in the fundamentals of grammar, punctuation, usage, and sentence structure, with supplements on dictionary use, words often confused, and spelling.

256 pages $2.50

HARPER & BROTHERS
49 E. 33d St., New York 16, N.Y.

"The best yet...




...Should be a required text for all college freshmen."

— PROFESSOR EVAN K. GIBSON.
Dept. of English, Oregon State College

More entries, carefully chosen (142,000) . . . more pages (1,760) . . . more examples of usage . . . more pictures (over 3,100 terms illustrated).

Cloth $5. With 26-Tab Thumb Index $6.

**THE MIRACLE OF LANGUAGE**

by Charlton Laird, Professor of English, University of Nevada, and author of **Laird's Promptory.** "Charming as well as learned. I shall recommend it with confidence to my students, as a most effective introduction to the field." — W. Cabell Greet, Dept. of English, Barnard College, Columbia University. $4.00

THE WORLD PUBLISHING CO.
Cleveland 2, Ohio

**FORM AND IDEA**

30 Essays for College Study

by

*Morton W. Bloomfield*

and

*Edwin W. Robbins*

Selected from many areas of knowledge, written in widely varying styles, and arranged in order of increasing complexity, the essays in this text demonstrate how, in successful writing, form and mastery of content interpenetrate. Included are the direct, factual essay, the argumentative essay of opinion, the character sketch, the descriptive essay, the book review, the critical essay, the whimsical, and the evocative essay. Notes, questions and theme assignments follow each selection.

1953 288pp $2.60

*The Macmillan Company*

60 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 11, N.Y.

The Achievement of **AMERICAN CRITICISM**

**Clarence A. Brown**
Marquette University

**Ready in April**—The first book to offer representative selections of American literary criticism from colonial times to the present. Readings illustrate development of criticism in terms of various periods and movements in the growth of American literature. 742 pp.

**The CREATIVE READER**

**R. W. Stallman**
University of Connecticut;
**R. E. Watters**
University of British Columbia

**Ready in April**—An anthology containing a rich and diversified selection of fiction, drama, and poetry. Makes available materials for studying literary works in relation to the creative process by which they are understood and appreciated. Over 200 selections. 923 pages

**FORM and THOUGHT in PROSE**

**Wilfred H. Stone; Robert Hoopes**
— both of Stanford University

**Ready in April**—A collection of essays specifically designed to cultivate the student's ability to read critically, think consistently, write clearly, and strengthen his intellectual awareness. Questions develop the student's sensitivity to style and organization. 808 pages

**BETTER READING in COLLEGE**

**Martha Dallmann; Alma Sheridan**
— both of Ohio Wesleyan University

**Just published**—A textbook and workbook for the correction and improvement of reading skills and study habits. Exercises are graded readings and tests in the natural and social sciences and the humanities, chosen from current college textbooks. Paper cover. 308 pp.

THE RONALD PRESS COMPANY
15 East 26th St., New York 10

## Comments on Florida and Corning Institutes

I am a typical liberal arts product (many years ago) who was pushed into teaching business writing in a technological college. I have, therefore, come directly in touch with industry and its requirements for, and complaints about, the training of college graduates in language arts. When the CEA turned from debating linguistics to a consideration of the role of English teachers in modern business, I was immensely pleased. As time has passed, however, I have been disappointed. Here are my reasons.

**English May Lose by Default**

One cannot teach in a technological college without being vitally aware of the need for the humanities in society. Faculties of engineering, agriculture, and textiles, as well as design, now require as many liberal arts courses as possible and remind students that technologists must see their professions in the light of human needs. On the other hand, an English teacher in such an institution soon learns the language deficiencies of all college graduates. Over and over, he is told by industrialists that the technologist cannot write or speak intelligently and the liberal arts man cannot understand the practical business necessities, largely because he does not comprehend the art of business communications. It is the failure of the CEA to attack this problem first that disappoints me most.

Moreover, there is grave danger in technological colleges that English departments may lose their functions, humanistically and linguistically, to the social science departments. The move towards general education is very strong.

**In a World Apart**

The humanistic and spiritual values of literature are obvious to us. Teachers of English, however, must not live in ivory towers. They must live in the world as it is and be willing to meet business. From *The CEA Critic* and the Institute in Florida, I get the impression that many English teachers in liberal arts colleges want nothing to do with anything practical, and that they expect business to come to them. In fact, I suspect that the liaison was initiated by business.

Consider the articles in *The CEA Critic* last spring. The authors all proclaim the value of English as a humanizing subject for future leaders in business, and they all agree that industry should hire English majors. But they offer nothing tangible for the business employer. Courses in business writing they almost unanimously damn, and in so doing reveal a lamentable misunderstanding of courses in their own field. The humane and psychological aspects of effective business communication these men seem unaware of. Even in their own writing style, they show inability to prepare students for careers in business. Professors who average thirty-seven words a sentence know nothing of modern trends in business communication. They live in a world apart, a comfortable, cozy world, in which, apparently, they never hear of Flesch, Rolland, Gunning, *et al.*, nor the practical application of semantics by Maverick, Gamble, Asbury, and other writers for business.

**Shades of Rousseau**

Contributors to the *Critic*, of course, are not the only English teachers who damn without knowledge. At the request of Professor C. R. Anderson (U. of Illinois), secretary of the American Business Writing Association, and the suggestion of the editor of *Collegiate News and Views*, I am writing a rebuttal to Gerber's (Lafayette College) article, "The Writing Business or Business Writing," in the October issue of that magazine. He, like the writers in the *Critic*, thinks that a course in business writing consists mostly of the letter format, and that once a student has taken freshman composition, he can write for all purposes. On such a basis, one may as well abolish all advanced courses in writing — journalism, creative writing, and the rest. No need to prepare for anything specifically; just write. Shades of Rousseau and Pestalozzi!

**Enthusiasm Not Enough**

The Florida Institute impressed me as all idealistic enthusiasm. Two days before, I had read a paper to the English section of the American Society of Engineering Education. My general topic was the teaching of business writing to engineers. As I said to Harry Warfel, "Wonder what the reception would have been at the Institute?" I heard a very brilliant young priest eruditely review the warmth of human wisdom that great writers from Chaucer to Emerson have contributed, and at the same time ridicule the "great teacher" idea, Bliss Perry in particular. He mentioned no specific way in which the field of English can help employers. Evidently he would leave such matters to men like G. W. Chapman.

I heard a mild-mannered businessman talk in generalities. When I told Brother Cormac Philip that I once studied under Perry, and asked if had, also, he replied, "No." When I placed the talk of the businessman against the stern questions of businessmen attending the ASEE Convention, I found no answers. Those men asked, "When are you going to turn out engineers who have a rounded view of society and, above all, can write a clear sentence? When are you going to give us graduates who can talk and write intelligently?" Industrialists rarely see any of that small yearly group, .4% of the college graduates, who receive degrees in English.

**Wanted: Realistic Approach**

My years of membership in the American Business Writing Association and of teaching both business communications and literature have made me realize the need for a liaison between English and business. As chairman of an ABWA committee conducting a nation-wide survey on the teaching of business writing in colleges, I have learned the need for broadly trained teachers of English. Sheer enthusiasm and lofty idealism, however, are no substitutes for a realistic appraisal. We teachers must discover how we can serve the individual business before we can hope to serve more widely. For this reason alone, I have written you; I believe this statement to be a fact.

**CEA Meeting at Raleigh**

The English Department at North Carolina State College also feels as I do. We are, therefore, entertaining the regional CEA next October 16. It will be the first time in our area that the Association has met on a technological campus. We shall have some speakers from industry, and hope to have the deans from our professional schools to introduce them. Dr. Lodwick Hartley is in charge.

**English Needed**

A moment or so ago, I finished reading the latest *Critic* and Nickerson's "Business and Human Values." The Institute at Corning must have been well worth attending. I wish that I could have been there.

Nickerson shows clearly why he is in a top-notch position. I am impressed by his constant emphasis upon the need to train men and women to think and to associate with people. These are the qualities I am told young college graduates do not possess. In my efforts to study correspondence and report writing methods in businesses, I am asked over and over why graduates cannot think through a clear sentence, letter, or report, and cannot present what they have to say from the other

(Continued on Page 8)

*Notable Features of*

**ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**A PERIOD ANTHOLOGY**

*Edited by*

**Albert C. Baugh and George Wm. McClelland**

744 representative selections from English literature from **Beowulf** to W. H. Auden's **The Managers.**
Complete texts are used wherever possible.
5 complete plays.
8 period introductions, each by a specialist in the field.
Rich and informative biographical and critical introductions.

**1536 pages, $6.75**

***Appleton-Century Crofts***

Publishers of
THE NEW CENTURY CYCLOPEDIA OF NAMES
35 West 32 St., New York 1, N. Y.

For the well-rounded course in freshman English

**American College English**

**A Handbook of Usage and Composition**

Harry R. Warfel
University of Florida
Ernst G. Mathews
University of Illinois
John C. Bushman
Los Angeles State College

- A practical study of English composition focused on the needs of college students
- A functional treatment of grammar in a compact, well-organized "handbook"
- A stimulating discussion of rhetoric illustrated by contemporary writings of wide appeal

College Division

**American Book Company**

55 Fifth Avenue • New York 3, N. Y.

BREAD LOAF

**SCHOOL of ENGLISH**

OF MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

JUNE 30-AUG. 14 • 35th Session

Bread Loaf, Vermont

Special lectures include:
Saul Bellow • Robert Frost
Oscar Williams

Bread Loaf School of English uniquely located in a beautiful Green Mountain bowl, offers a varied curriculum by a nationally distinguished faculty at its 35th session:

George Anderson • Carlos Baker
Warren Beck • Donald Davidson
Arthur Jensen • John Kelleher
Clifford Lyons • Eric Volkert

Early Application advised. Write for information on admission, courses, degrees to:

Language Schools Office
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
Middlebury 29, Vermont

A New Spring Text
For College Composition

**READINGS IN COLLEGE COMPOSITION I**

*Linnehan and Partridge*

**SCRIBNERS**

*the third edition*

Published in March

**THE MACMILLAN HANDBOOK OF ENGLISH**

by John M. Kierzek

Distinguished in its field for completeness and clarity, this teachable handbook has been thoroughly and carefully revised. The text approaches the student in an informal manner and at the same time gives him a firm footing in the matter of usage without being rigidly prescriptive.

***$2.90***

*The Macmillan Company*

60 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 11, N.Y.

(Continued from Page 7)

man's point of view. They do not use the HT—human touch—as Frailey says.

We teachers of English must hasten to do our share. Lately I have been impressed with the fact that businessmen are taking the initiative and also blaming us. Walter Weir, vice president of Donahue and Coe, in "Copy Writing Is Still an Art," *Printers' Ink*, June 19, 1953, advises writers to read widely in standard authors. Robert D. Breth, in "Human Relations and Communications Are Twins," *Personnel Journal*, December, 1952, brings out the point that good writing must be vitally concerned with human beings. A survey by Controllers Institute of America, however, says that the training of college graduates to communicate in speaking and writing is handed to the persons who hire them. Personally, I think that English teachers have much to do. We must remember that only .4% of college graduates take degrees in English each year.

Congratulations on an excellent Institute.

A. BERNARD SHELLEY
North Carolina State College

## Notre Dame Writers' Conference

Notre Dame will hold its sixth annual Writers' Conference, June 28 - July 3. There will be three workshops: Fiction, in charge of Richard Sullivan; the Teaching of Creative Writing, in charge of John T. Frederick (both Frederick and Sullivan being members of the Notre Dame Department of English); and Poetry, in charge of Henry Rago, of the University of Chicago. Besides Rago, two other visitors will be on the staff: Anne Fremantle, of New York, and Warren Beck, of Lawrence College, Appleton, Wisconsin. For information, address Prof. Louis Hasley, at Box 9, Notre Dame, Indiana.

The luncheon talk that Prof. Maurice Graney, head of the Department of Industrial Management at Purdue, gave at the 1952 CEA Institute, University of Massachusetts, was published in the January, 1954, issue of *Dunn's Review and Modern Industries*.

### NECEA at Rhode Island

The Spring NECEA meeting will be held May 8 at the University of Rhode Island. Walter Simmons is program chairman and the general sessions speaker will be Perry Miller, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton.

A series of eight half-hour broadcasts by eminent American poets will be recorded by the newly-formed Literary Society at the University of Massachusetts, as the result of a $4500 grant-in-aid made by the National Association of Educational Broadcasters. "New England Anthology" will be the title of the series. The central theme will be the expression in poetry of the American concept of the free man by writers who make use of the New England scene or heritage.

The recorded programs will be broadcast locally by station WMUA, university-owned educational FM outlet, and throughout the nation by a network of educational stations serviced by the National Association of Educational Broadcasters.

Wayne University is undertaking a program for doctoral study in English, beginning in September. It is offering fellowships of $1747 and tuition, and assistantships of $1202 and tuition for students of superior scholarships and promise as future teachers of English.

### PRIZE WINNER

George S. Wykoff, Purdue, is making the award to the co-winner of the second prize in the CEA essay contest to Arthur K. House, a Purdue senior. This prize-winning essay was written in response to an assignment in the Expository Writing course taught by Burnham Carter, Jr. of Purdue. Arthur House took one semester of his Freshman English with Professor Wykoff.

### I Am Amazed...

Dear Max:

I am amazed to find my name signed to the article on "Abolishing Freshman Composition" in the March issue of the *CEA Critic*, which arrived today. The real author is Dr. Frank Nelson, of Long Beach State College. It was I who advised him to submit the ms. to you, and so I suppose he mentioned my name in his letter, whence the mistake must have arisen.

The situation will be embarrassing both for Dr. Nelson and for myself, and I hope you will print a correction in next month's issue. It is a good article, and I do not feel ashamed of having it attributed to me; but I do feel that the real author deserves the credit!

Incidentally, the mistake of signing my name to Nelson's article was further confused by appending "UCLA" as my institution. I am at the University of *Southern* California (colloquially USC), which is entirely separate from the rival institution at the other side of town.

LIONEL STEVENSON

### And Are We Humiliated!

Dear Lionel:

You are amazed and embarrassed. We are, too . . . and *humiliated!* Our deepest apologies to you and Frank Nelson. We'll do all we can to spread the news of the double correction.

As sponsor, though not author, of the article, you can derive satisfaction from this: the piece has provoked brisk discussion. Already it has brought further grist to our mill. Gratefully,

MAX

### Calif. CEA

The spring meeting was held March 27 at Loyola University of Los Angeles. "It was thoroughly successful." About sixty attended, and the morning session was devoted to a stimulating and practical panel discussion on "Training the Secondary School English Teacher." Father Ryan of Loyola was elected as the new regional president.

## SECEA Meeting at Winthrop College

The conference at Winthrop College Feb. 19 and 20 took the form of an *Institute* — three short movements in the morning, with coda in the afternoon. Celesta Wine of Winthrop was local chairman of arrangements. In the morning, Kenneth Knickerbocker led off with the exchange idea in general. Philip Hammer, as moderator, representing the management and professional folks, put his people through some rather searching discussion — the panel was good. Paul Haines finished off the morning by presenting the liberal arts contribution in positive terms.

Officers of SECEA for the coming year are: President—Sarah Herndon, Florida State; 1 VP—W. P. Fidler, U. of Alabama; 2 VP—G. W. Smith, U. of So. Carolina; ST—Margaret Trotter, Agnes Scott College.

### 1954 CEA Institute

Recently added names of participants:

Richard Andrews, Executive Director, Corning Glass Works Foundation.
John E. Burchard, Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities, MIT.
John Fisher, NYU, and MLA Treasurer.
Julian W. Hill, Executive Secretary, Committee on Fellowships and Grants, E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.
Frank Kille, Dean, Carleton College.
Stanley Pargellis, Librarian, Newberry Library.
Kenneth Patrick, General Electric Corp.


A combined *basic text* and *reference handbook:*

**WRITER'S GUIDE AND INDEX TO ENGLISH**

by Porter G. Perrin
848 pages
$3.00 list

Cross references between the **Guide** and the **Index** provide easy transition from one part of the book to the other.

**SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY**

Chicago Atlanta Dallas San Francisco New York

**Two New Volumes in the Standard Edition of EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY**
**$1.65 each**

**Napoleon's Letters**

Some 300 of the most interesting of the Emperor's letters, chosen and translated by J. M. Thompson to illustrate every side of Napoleon's character and career from Ajaccio to St. Helena. Available in July #995

**Persian Poetry**

Edited by Professor A. J. Arberry. An anthology of English translations from twenty-five Persian poets — lyrical, mystical, didactic, idyllic, epigrammatic and epic. Available in July. #996

Everyman's Library — the world's most comprehensive collection of reprints — contains hundreds of great books available in no other inexpensive edition. Send for free catalogue.

E. P. DUTTON & CO., Inc.
300 Fourth Avenue New York 10

*New Second Edition*

**SHURTER'S EFFECTIVE LETTERS IN BUSINESS**

By Robert L. Shurter, Case Institute of Technology

250 pages, $3.95
(text edition available)

Based on the premise that there is no special form of expression called "Business English," this well-known book sets forth the principles of good writing — conciseness, readability, and simplicity — as they apply to the business letter. In this second edition an introductory chapter has been added stressing the importance of good letter writing to the individual and to the company for which he works, and a new final chapter, entitled "Writing the Memorandum" has been added.

Send for a copy on approval

**McGRAW-HILL BOOK CO., Inc.**
330 West 42nd St., New York 36, N. Y.

*New Editions of*

**The Yale Shakespeare**

Helge Kokeritz and Charles T. Prouty, *General Editors*

Completely revised and reset. Send for examination copies

*Now ready*

AS YOU LIKE IT — *Samuel C. Burchell*
TWELFTH NIGHT — *William P. Holden*
TAMING OF THE SHREW — *Thomas G. Bergin*
MACBETH — *Eugene M. Waith*

*Others in preparation*

Cloth bound, each $1.50

**YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS**
New Haven, Connecticut

1954

held
ity of
ughly
ttend-
n was
prac-
Train-
nglish
Loy-
egion-

throp

nthrop
k the
short
with
Celesta
chair-
n the
bocker
dea in
mod-
anage-
s, put
rather
panel
nished
ng the
posi-

r the
dent—
State;
f Ala-
U. of
Trot-

artici-

e Di-
Works

Social
MIT.
MLA

Secre-
wships
ont de

n Col-

, New-

lectric

e

reset.
pies

*chell*

*olden*
*W*
*ergin*

*Faith*

$1.50
$3